THE LAUGHING PHILOSOPHER.

There was a great philosopher
Lived years and years ago;
And such a merry soul was he
They called him Laughing Joe.

For laugh he would throughout the year,
Let things go wrong or right;
Let Fortune smile or Fortune frown,
His heart was ever light.

And little children every day
Would gather round his place
To listen to his hearty laugh
Or see his smiling face.

But gloomy-minded people said
They thought it was a shame
A man should be disposed to laugh
At good and bad the same.

At last they gathered in a crowd
And pulled his dwelling down;
They hustled him around the streets
And drove him from the town,

To find a home beyond the sea
Upon a foreign strand,
And never dare to set a foot
Upon his native land.

But when they chased him from the realm
Those people little knew
What even one good-natured soul
And smiling face can do.

Now children seeking after Joe
Would round the ruins stray,
And grieve because the people drove
Their laughing friend away.

And long before a year went by
Those bad-behaving men,
Sent messengers across the sea
To coax him back again.

And out they ran with princely gifts
To meet him at the shore,
And begged him there to live and laugh
In peace for evermore.
—Palmer Cox, in St. Nicholas.

A DECIDED "NO"

By FREDERICK GORDON

WHY should a woman ever be expected to say "Yes" or "No?" So thought Claude, as she sat one morning at her writing-table, with her chair tilted back and a frown of vexation on her pretty face. It was too bad! For Jack had asked her the night before to marry him, and had made her promise to send an answer the next day. Why had he not insisted on a reply at the time? Then it would have been settled by now, one way or the other.

"Of course, I should have refused him," she said to herself, "but it would have been so much easier to say than to write." All the same, she could not help remembering how nice Jack had been on the occasion, and she felt that she might almost have been tempted to say "Yes," when he put his hands gently on her shoulders, and looking closely into her eyes, had asked the question. If he had only drawn her to him and had dared to kiss her—well, she did not know what she might not have said. Perhaps it was just as well he didn't! She was still free!

But this horrid letter had to be written. Of course, it must be "No!" At the same time, how was she to put it? Must she write a formal letter and give her reasons? That would be to say the least, unpleasant, and besides she would not like to hurt him; and then she was not quite clear about the reasons. Perhaps a postcard with the single word "No" on it would be best! But servants are given to read postcards, and she would have to sign her name, or at least put her initials. That would not do; it must be a letter.

So Claude began:

"[My Dear Jack],—I'm sure this is the last letter I shall ever write to you, because I'm going to say 'No!' I see that I've begun it all wrong, but this is my last sheet of paper. So, please, don't read the words in brackets—I should have commenced 'Dear Captain Vane.'

"I suppose that, just like a man, you want reasons for my answer. You used to say that women never had any reasons for what they did, only excuses. You added that this was one of their chief attractions. Now, I must be most unattractive, for I've heaps of reasons, and never an excuse. First of all, I didn't like you [at first at least]—you mustn't read the words in brackets. That was when you used to show me no particular attention, and everyone else was rushing to fetch and carry for me. I didn't like that, but I'm not sure that I actually hated you for it. I dare say my pride [or conceit] was hurt. Recollect the words in brackets are invisible!

"Then somehow or other I got to feel that I should like to do something for you. Wasn't it ridiculous? But you would never accept any favors. Even one night at a ball, when you asked me for a dance and gave you my programme [which I purposely felt blank]—'ware the brackets—you only wrote down your name for a miserable square. Girls don't like that, and I've not forgotten it. The same night you took me to the carriage, though I can't imagine why you did it. I had refused a lot of dances and had sat out several, a thing which all pretty girls enjoy. But I suppose I can't be pretty, as I didn't enjoy it a bit. I had seen that you, too, had not been dancing [I wasn't the least angry, only a little sorry]. But you kept looking [at me] so unhappily, that I felt inclined to forgive you for not dancing with the other girls. It must have been such an act of self-denial, and I adore unselfishness in men.

"Afterwards when I was stepping into the carriage I somehow or other managed to let one of my gloves fall. You saw it at once, and instead of attending properly to me, you picked it up, and made such a grave bow as you handed it to me saying: 'I think you've dropped a glove' [it wasn't even 'your glove']. Of course my glove had dropped, and any other man would have waited till I had driven away before he picked it up. [I know, because I have looked.]

"I was annoyed. The glove was quite a new one and I had hardly soiled it, for somehow or other I hadn't danced much. You looked dreadfully glum as you picked it up. I think it must have been my carelessness in letting it drop in the dirt. I am extravagant, I fear; and as you told me last night that you were a poor man, I am afraid I must have shocked your sensibilities!

"Why on earth did you say anything about money? What had it to do with the question? I know I have heaps of it; and it's not a bad thing either, as it sometimes helps a man to marry the girl he loves. Remember [dear Jack]—I needn't mention the brackets again—when you ask another girl to marry you, if she happens to have money [which I hope she will for your sake] don't refer to it. If she cares a bit for you, as you deserve, she'll be only ashamed to feel that she has so little to give you.

"I've heaps of other reasons for saying 'No,' but under any circumstances I could never marry a man who didn't take his answer from his lady-love's own lips. The girl who consents to such a thing deserves to be married in her bonnet and in shoes two sizes too big for her.

"Now, I'll give you a piece of good advice before I stop. When you propose to 'the other girl,' don't mention, as I have said, her money, if she has any; don't say you are unworthy of her [that won't be true] and not fit to tie her shoelace, though I recollect you once tied mine very nicely in spite of your fingers trembling. Don't, above all, say that you are not anxious to hurry her, but would like her to consider the matter well. I can't imagine a lover of mine saying that, when, perhaps, my heart was like the warning of a clock upon the point of midday striking, and breaking into a perpetual high noon chime of love and joy. After that, it could only go on 'gurr-gurr-rrrrrr,' straining its poor works and chords, and allowing the true sun time of life to leave it behind. It could never speak clear and true to one who wanted to set it back.

"Now, to finish my good and impartial advice: when you are addressing the 'other girl,' you should lay your hands gently upon her shoulders, and look closely into her eyes [I believe you have learned this already]. It is cruel to retreat at this moment, especially if, as I have said, the heart-clock is on the point of striking. At the same time it is most difficult to go back, for, like particles of matter, the forces of attraction grow incredibly strong at infinitesimal distances [I have found it so]. Then, having got so far, you should say: 'Claude [or whatever the name of 'the other girl' may be], I love you. Will you be my wife?'

"You'll possibly hear then a sound like the warning of the clock, a sort of sob of all the strings of its heart. You should have lost all hesitation by this time, and you should take the face of, say, the clock, quite close, and kiss it gently first on the figure XII [that's the brow], then most warmly on figures IX and III [these are the cheeks], and then rapturously on figure VI, just where the comic artists put the mouth when they make the clock-face human. You shouldn't neglect the hands, which are often fascinatingly pretty and delightful to kiss—at least, so they say in clock-hand! I hope your little clock, when you try all this, will give the true cuckoo cry, which is the fit song of the ever new season when the young maid's fancy turns—but not lightly—to thoughts of love.

"I sha'n't trust this letter to the hands of the penny postman, but shall send it by my little groom. Isn't it funny that we used to call him Cupid because of his rosy face and bow legs? Now he shall speed, not indeed with his shafts, but behind them, in my own polo-cart.

"I inclose the glove, in case you may have liked to have something to remind you of an old friend, who is very sorry to have to send you such a decisive 'No.'

"I shall be in the conservatory at nine to-night, and if you care to go through a rehearsal of the scene with 'the other girl,' I shall put on my prettiest frock—the pale green one that you like—and do my best to make you perfect [I think you are that already].

"But don't forget that you must always be kind to your little clock; firm, too, so as not to let the works run down for want of judicious winding. There is only one universal key, and you have it. [Ever yours],

"CLAUDIE."

—Black and White.

Keeping the Snake Busy.

A prominent actor tells this story about two brother players and their experiences in a Maine temperance town: Feeling in need of alcoholic refreshment, they made application at the local drug stores, but were told that stimulants were sold only in cases of snake-bite. The actors had about decided to content themselves with such refreshment as the town provided when they heard that a certain resident owned a rattlesnake which he kept as a pet. Securing his address, they called on him and offered to hire his snake for use in some scientific experiments. "Nothing doing," answered the owner; "he's booked solid for four months ahead."—Chicago Chronicle.

German Factory Girls.

A recent attempt to reduce the daily hours of female factory workers at Freiberg, Germany, was opposed, on the grounds that competition with Italy, Japan and China would not permit it and that, if factory life were made too attractive, domestic help would be still more difficult to obtain than it is now.—N. Y. Post.

HON. PAUL MORTON.

He succeeds Secretary Moody as head of the navy department. Has been the second vice president of the Santa Fe railway.

ODD REGIMENTAL CUSTOMS

English Soldiers Have Some Quaint Observances and Special Privileges.

There is not a more curious custom in the British army than the holding of the leek feasts by the Royal Welsh Fusilers, the origin of which is "wropt in myst'ry," but which is as firmly established as the custom of saluting the colors, says London Tit-Bits.

Every year on St. David's day at the regimental dinner a dish of pungeant leeks is laid upon the officers' mess table, and every officer who has not done so on some previous occasion and every guest present must partake of the leeks and express an opinion on their merits, which should not be disparaging, but need not necessarily be too flattering. Moreover, there is a certain position in which the "feaster" must stand at the time, and the fact that one of his feet must be on the table leads one to suppost that the custom originated when "table manners" were not quite so elegant as they are now. And while he discourses on leeks in general and his leek in particular the "feaster's" voice is drowned by the rolling of a drum played immediately behind him. Perhaps the drum business is intended to drown any disparaging remark which may involuntarily spring from his lips.

Many people have been led to wonder why the men of the Gloucester regiment have shields to the back as well as in front of their helmets, while other helmets only have shields in front. The custom is intended to commemorate a famous event in the regiment's history. One day at Alexandria the Gloucesters were having a stiff fight when they were suddenly attacked in the rear. It was a critical moment, but the situation was smartly saved by the left flank suddenly swinging round, back to back, and repelling their attackers front and rear. Since then they have had shields front and rear of their helmets to signify they are capable of fighting behind their backs as in a frontal direction.

Actors in military plays, and occasionally artists, are apt to fall into error in their arrangement of the sashes worn by officers and noncommissioned officers. The rule, however, is simple enough. The sashes of officers generally go over the left shoulder and bunch at the right hip, while with noncoms the reverse is correct. But there is one peculiar exception to this latter rule, for the sergeants of the Somersetshire light infantry all wear their sashes in the same way as officers—over the left shoulder.

The reason for this is that at Culloden all the officers of the regiment were all killed or severely wounded, and the sergeants took command of the men, and after a long, severe fight won a signal victory. In consequence the sergeants of the S. L. I. have since been allowed to wear their sashes as if they were officers. The same regiment has the distinction of a black line worked into the lace on their uniforms, and this also commemorates the loss of officers the regiment suffered at Culloden. Similarly, the Seventeenth Lancers wear black lace on their decorations, in memory of Wolfe's death at Quebec.

There are only three regiments in the British army possessing the right to march through the city of London with flags unfurled and their bands playing—the Royal Marines, the Royal Fusiliers and the East Kents. The custom which gives these regiments the exclusive right arises from the fact that they sprang from the city, just as the C. I. V.'s did.

Policemen's Cast-Off Clothes.

Strange as it may seem, a lot of money is made out of policemen's cast-off uniforms. Quantities are bought by African traders and exported to various parts of the "Dark continent," where they are exchanged for palm-oil, ivory, skins and other merchandise. It is by no means an uncommon sight to see a swarthy savage dressed in the uniform of a London policeman, and wearing the regulation helmet of the force.

THE HOUSES OF MANCHURIA

Are All Alike in Four Respects, as Far as Circumstances Will Permit.

From the dwelling of the rich banker to the hut of the savage, says the author of "The Long White Mountain," all houses in Manchuria are alike in four respects, so far as circumstances will admit. First, all face the south, because that is the quarter from which good influences come, and it has the incidental advantage of keeping the cruel north wind at the back. Secondly, Manchurian houses are all one-storied. Thirdly, the front of the house is filled with movable window-frames, with lattice panes of paper, not glass. As the summer advances the paper can be torn away and the house ventilated; and then, when winter returns, the paper is very inexpensive to replace. Fourthly, built up against the wall, there is a k'ang running the length of the interior, and communicating between room and room.

The k'ang is a platform about two and a half feet high and five feet broad, made of brick. Inside is a flue carried four or five times up and down the whole length of the k'ang. At one end is a boiler in which the family dinner is cooked.

Outside in the yard is a chimney ten or 12 feet high, which creates a draft through the flue. Thus all the smoke and heat of the kitchen fire pass backward and forward through the k'ang, warm it thoroughly and finally emerge through the chimney. The top of the k'ang is covered with matting made of strips of bamboo or the rind of the tall millet.

The convenience and economy of the k'ang are marvelous. Throughout the day it serves as a place on which to sit and talk. At meal-times it is the dining-room. The food is served on small tables a foot high, round which the family squats.

In the evening the beds are unrolled, and it forms the general sleeping-place. In the cold weather, with the thermometer below zero outside and below freezing-point even within, a nice warm k'ang makes a most agreeable bed on which to sleep.

It is wonderful how little fuel is required to heat it. A boy lights a wisp of straw and stuffs it in a hole at the foot of the k'ang. It seems impossible so insignificant a fire can affect the great mass of brickwork. But in about half an hour a gentle glow pervades the top of the k'ang, and all night long it remains delightfully warm.

If in ignorance we ever ordered more fuel for the k'ang, we only made it insufferably hot. Occasionally in inns we found k'angs so scorching by reason of several series of dinners having been cooked or because our beds were too near the boiler that we were compelled to sleep on the floor or on tables, or else to lay a quantity of straw under our bedding to mitigate the heat.

How the Count Felt.

The war between Russia and Japan has given rise to many reminiscences on the part of those who have met socially the representatives of both nations. A Philadelphia society girl, who has just returned from a visit to Washington, tells an amusing story of her introduction at a semi-official reception to one of the attaches of the Russian legation. "Of course, I didn't catch his name," she said, in telling the story. "It seemed a mile long, and twice as hard to pronounce. It sounded like 'bottle of whisky,' with a count in fount of it. Well, when I was introduced to him I said, in a jocular sort of way: 'Count Bottle-of-Whisky, how do you do-sky?' He looked at me quizzically, and then remarked: 'Bully-govitch.' And maybe I didn't feel cheap!"—Philadelphia Record.

After the Play.

He—Do you believe in evolution?

She—Yes, indeed! Isn't it inspiring to think there is nothing but 50 cents between man and the oyster?—Harper's Bazar.

Railroad Time Card.

LOUISVILLE & NASHVILLE.

ARRIVAL OF TRAINS AT PARIS.

From Cincinnati—10:58 am; 5:33 pm; 9:45 pm.
From Lexington—5:11 am; 7:45 pm; 3:23 pm; 6:10 pm.
From Richmond—5:05 am; 7:50 am; 3:18 pm.
From Maysville—7:40 am; 3:15 pm.

DEPARTURE OF TRAINS FROM PARIS.

To Cincinnati—5:15 am; 7:55 am; 3:30 pm.
To Lexington—7:50 am; 11:05 am; 5:40 pm; 9:19 p. m.
To Richmond—11:10 am; 5:38 pm; 9:51 pm.
To Maysville—8:00 am; 6:20 pm.

F. B. CARR, Agt.

FRANKFORT & CINCINNATI.

Arr. from Frankfort—8:30 am; 3:25pm.
Lve. for Frankfort—9:30 am; 5:42 pm.

All F. & C. trains arrive and depart from L. & N. Station.